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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: HAITI, U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage January 21 on the aftermath of Prosecutor-General Chen Tsung-ming's resignation Tuesday; on the legislative by-election slated for the end of February; on the rescue and relief efforts in earthquake-stricken Haiti; and on developments in cross-Straits relations. Nearly all major Chinese-language papers reported on a Taiwan military C-130 cargo plane, which they said has, for the first time, made refueling stops in the United States en route to Haiti for rescue and relief efforts. The pro-unification "United Daily News" ran a front-page news story with the headline reading "Humanitarian [Assistance] Comes First and a Diplomatic Breakthrough, Taiwan's Military Aircraft Refuels at U.S. Base en Route to Haiti."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" discussed the U.S. rescue and relief efforts in Haiti and said the U.S. military really had no alternative but to intervene forcefully during the time of a power vacuum in Haiti. A column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" and an editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" both discussed the fiftieth anniversary of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. The "Taiwan News" editorial said the "importance of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance now lies primarily in safeguarding East Asia from the growing military threat posed by the authoritarian Chinese Communist Party-ruled PRC and move the Marine air forces on Futenma to a site 300 kilometers closer to Taiwan and the China mainland will undoubtedly send a major political signal to Beijing." End summary.

¶3. Haiti

"Having the Foreign Minister Personally Assume Command of Rescue Relief Operations?"

Columnist Antonio Chiang wrote in his column in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 520,000] (1/21):

"In its history, the United States has sent troops to Haiti many times. This time, Washington has again dispatched huge military forces to Haiti, immediately taking control over the airport and the Presidential Office [of Haiti] and scarcely paying any attention to the U.N. peacekeeping force, as if it leaped at the chance to occupy the nation. Such mighty actions have drawn quite a lot of ridicule and criticism [for the United States]. Nonetheless, it has been for some time that Haiti is without a government, and without [the United States' moves] to maintain public order, it would be unlikely for international rescue and relief operations to start [in Haiti]. Disaster rescue and relief operations are like combat operations. During the time of a power vacuum, the U.S. military really had no alternative but to intervene forcefully and [help] manage [Haiti] for the Haitian government. For the rescue and relief efforts [in Haiti] this time, the United States has been leading the way [among the countries] in the world in donating money and providing assistance. Secretary Hillary Clinton even went so far as to visit Haiti herself. She and [former President] Bill Clinton spent their honeymoon in Haiti, so they have special feelings for this country.

..."

14. U.S.-Japan Security Treaty

A) "The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Amendments to U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security"

The "International Lookout" column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] wrote (1/21):

"It has been fifty years since the amendments were made to the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. Not only did the foreign ministers and defense ministers from the United States and Japan issue a joint statement [on January 19], but Japan's Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama also gave remarks [on the topic]. As previously discussed by this column, such practices were a fabulous show put up under pressure by the United States. Are the facts behind the scenes really the same as what is shown to the public?
..."

"Washington wanted to seize this opportunity to stress that Japan's security cannot be sustained without the United States and that the United States is indispensable in the region. Or else what is the need to publicize the fiftieth anniversary of the treaty? Japan, on the other hand, wanted to seize this opportunity to emphasize its value for future cooperation [with the United States]. As a result, now it is still too early to determine the future direction of U.S.-Japan relations. ..."

B) "Taiwan and the Future in the U.S.-Japan Alliance"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (1/21):

"On January 19, 1960, the U.S. and Japan signed a far reaching 'U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security' over the intense opposition of opposition lawmakers and violent demonstrations by leftist labor and student organizations. ... The importance of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance now lies primarily in safeguarding East Asia from the growing military threat posed by the authoritarian Chinese Communist Party-ruled PRC and move the Marine air forces on Futenma to a site 300 kilometers closer to Taiwan and the China mainland will undoubtedly send a major political signal to Beijing. Only last week, Beijing protested angrily over Washington's decision to sell advanced Patriot III-C anti-missile missiles to Taiwan and evidently believes that this procurement is part of a scheme to link Japan, South Korea and Taiwan into an East Asian theatre anti-missile defensive network aimed at the PRC, which itself has deployed well over one thousand missiles in its coastal provinces targeted at Taiwan.

"Although the joint statement made no explicit mention of Taiwan, its affirmation that the alliance is founded on the basis of common values of 'democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law' and the planned forward strategic redeployment indicates that both Obama and Hatoyama realize that it is necessary to hedge the risk that the PRC will decide not to "play a constructive and responsible role in the international arena" despite their differences with more conservative predecessors. However, a new source of uncertainty lies within Taiwan itself. If the restored 'former authoritarian' rightist Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) government of President Ma Ying-jeou draws increasingly closer to the PRC, Taiwan may find itself turning into a gap in the U.S.-Japan security network instead of an unacknowledged partner in this democratic alliance."

STANTON